



# NATIONAL BIOSAFETY AUTHORITY

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### REQUEST FOR COMMENTS ON AN APPLICATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL RELEASE (OPEN FIELD CULTIVATION) OF GENETICALLY ENGINEERED MAIZE IN KENYA

The National Biosafety Authority (NBA) was established through the Biosafety Act No. 2, 2009 to regulate all activities involving genetically modified organisms (GMOs) by ensuring safety of human and animal health and provision of adequate protection to the environment.

Pursuant to the provisions of the *Biosafety Act No. 2, 2009, Section 19(4)* read together with *Biosafety (Environmental Release) Regulations, 2011, Section 12(1) (2)*, the National Biosafety Authority (NBA) hereby announces to the public the receipt of an application for consideration of environmental release (open field cultivation), of genetically modified insect protected (Bt) maize (*Zea mays L.*) in Kenya. The Application, which follows several years of laboratory, greenhouse and confined field trials, was jointly submitted by the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) and the African Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF).

The contents in the application indicate that the Bt maize encodes *cry1Ab* gene whose presence in the Bt maize provides in-built protection against attack from stem borer insect pests. The Application also indicates that the Bt maize will require less insecticide applications and therefore costs less to produce.

The Application is currently undergoing a science-based review process by NBA together with relevant regulatory agencies and independent experts to ascertain that the proposed product is safe to human and animal health and to the environment. Key issues considered in food safety assessment include (but not limited) to: nutritional composition, toxicity and allergenicity, while environmental concerns include (but not limited) to: persistence and invasiveness, horizontal gene transfer and impact on non-target organisms.

The Biosafety act No. 2, 2009 provides that the public participates in the decision-making process through submissions to the Authority. It is in compliance with this provision that we request the public to participate through sending of comments, concerns and/or objections. The Authority therefore, will make the final decision on the Application based on risk assessments, socio-economic considerations and comments received from the public.

In the event of the Authority reaching a decision to grant an approval for environmental release of Bt maize in Kenya, due process governing testing, official release and commercialization of seeds and plant varieties in Kenya shall apply as per the national policy, legislation and guidelines for handling genetically modified crops in Kenya.

**All interested parties and persons should submit written comments/ concerns to this application to reach the undersigned not later than 30 calendar days from the date of this publication i.e. 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015.**

More information on the application as well as guidelines for public participation can be accessed in the Authority's website [www.biosafetykenya.go.ke](http://www.biosafetykenya.go.ke) or physically from the NBA offices during normal working hours in the contact address below.

Please send your written comments by mail to:  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**National Biosafety Authority**  
**Commission for University Education Complex**  
**Redhill Road, Off Limuru Road**  
**P O Box 28251-00100**  
**Nairobi**

Or by email: [er@biosafetykenya.go.ke](mailto:er@biosafetykenya.go.ke)

#### 4<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL BIOSAFETY CONFERENCE

**DATE: 11-14 August 2015, VENUE: KICC**

Registration is ongoing and abstracts are still being accepted until 30<sup>th</sup> July 2015.